

Decision Record – Proposed Changes to Primary School Priority Areas in Rugby

Cabinet Portfolio Holder taking decision:

Cllr Heather Timms, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Child Safeguarding, Early Intervention and Schools

Date of Decision: (NOT BEFORE 21 October 2011)

21 October 2011

Decision taken

I, as Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Child Safeguarding, Early Intervention and Schools, agrees to consultation taking place on proposed changes to primary school priority areas in Rugby, as set out in the officer report.

Reasons for Decisions

The Bilton Pavilions Housing development in Rugby does not all currently fall within the priority area of any primary school. Action must be taken to ensure that all of the properties on the development fall within the priority area of at least one school.

The School Admissions Regulations clearly state that if we are looking to make changes to admission arrangements we must consult for a period of no less than eight weeks between 1 November and 1 March. All steps must be taken to determine admission arrangements by mid April.

Background Information/ factors considered in arriving at these decisions - (set out below, all of this information is that set out in the officer report):

Background

- 1.0 A school priority area is a geographical area defined on rational grounds by the school's admission authority. Where a school is oversubscribed, the admission policy will ensure that children living in the priority area are given places before other applicants. There is no guarantee that all pupils living within a school's priority area will be admitted, but parents will have a strong expectation that places will generally be available at their priority school.
- 2.0 Part of the Bilton Pavilions development currently falls within the priority areas of St Oswald's C of E Primary School and part falls within the priority area for St Matthew's Bloxam C of E Primary School. However parts of the housing development at Bilton Pavillions do not currently appear within the area for any primary school. This will mean that the children of families living on parts of the development will not receive priority for admission to any primary school. This

is problematic and could result in families having to travel some distance to secure places for their children. It could also mean that children from the same family are unable to attend the same school as their siblings.

- 3.0 St Oswald's C of E Primary School, St Matthew's Bloxam C of E Primary School and Oakfield Primary School are the nearest schools to the development and it would seem appropriate to change existing priority areas for those schools to include the whole of the Bilton Pavillions development. The schools already admit children from the development and this proposal would simply help formalise existing practice.
- 4.0 Initial discussions have taken place with the three schools concerned and they are in favour of the proposal. It is envisaged that the three schools will be able to accommodate the children this increase in their priority area will bring.
- 5.0 If approved, this will ensure that children living on the Bilton Pavillions development fall within the shared priority area for St Oswald's C of E Primary School, St Matthew's Bloxam C of E Primary School and Oakfield Primary School. We do not envisage this proposal having an adverse effect on any other schools in the area as the children living on Bilton Pavillions already attend either St Oswald's C of E Primary School, St Matthew's Bloxam C of E Primary School or Oakfield Primary School.

Next Steps

- 6.0 The Local Authority is looking to run a consultation process between 1 November and 30 December 2011. This will then allow feedback to Elected Members for a decision In January or February 2012.
- 7.0 Consultation documents will be distributed to the parents/carers of all children in St Oswald's C of E Primary School, St Matthew's Bloxam C of E Primary School and Oakfield Primary School, the local MPs, the Diocesan Authorities, the Borough Council, all schools in the area, all Rugby County Councillors, Rugby Borough Ward Councillors, Trade Unions and Professional Associations and Neighbouring Local Authorities. Forms will also be made available in the local libraries and children's centres.
- 8.0 If approved, following formal consultations, the changes would take effect from September 2013.

Report Author:	Janet Neale
Head of Service:	Mark Gore
Strategic Director:	Marion Davis
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Heather Timms

Checklist

Urgent matter: yes/no*

No

Confidential or Exempt (state category of exempt information)

No

Is the decision contrary to the budget and policy framework

No

List of Reports considered [please attach or forward a copy]

Report from officer (text repeated above)

List of Background Papers [please include directorate contact names and numbers for access to background papers]

None

Any members and officers consulted or informed and any comments given.

For comment:

Councillors: Cllr Timms (Decision maker) and Watson,
Legal: Fay Ford, Victoria Gould, Naomi Bentley-Lawson
Finance: Simon Smith, Chris Norton
Strategic Directors
Equality: Tejay De Krester

For information:

Councillors Tandy, Ross, Balaam, Robbins